

SALON

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Salon Design Redefining the Paradigm

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Within the current context of evolving lifestyles, luxury salons are coming up by the dozen, if not more. The interior design of salons, therefore, has become increasingly important and has had to move beyond the basic premise of 'look good, feel good'. As the society is moving towards achieving a 'luxurious lifestyle', spending time in salons has become an important recreational activity for men and women, both. This, in turn, has crafted a need for engaging salon design solutions, where the spatial arrangement and décor play an integral role in influencing people's behaviour. This implies that the design of the place has the capability to enable the overall experience of visitors as being relaxing and memorable.

Spaces of leisure

A shift from service providing spaces to spaces of leisure, salon areas typically vary from 500 to 3000 square feet depending upon specific requirements. The layout is divided into four main parts, namely, reception and retail, the styling section, hair and skin treatment zone and lastly beauty, facial and spa rooms. These areas are highly functional and complex in terms of the multitude of activities that take place. They are also public and highly intimate spaces where one expects to be comfortable, while being vulnerable. So first and foremost, an environment that exudes a sense of privacy and comfort for a visitor needs to be conceptualised. The practical aspect plays a critical role in a salon right from the lighting, furniture, mirrors to materials and the colour palette.

Different functions, different spaces

Spaces following a systematic and coordinated methodology, including research, analysis and integration of knowledge into the creative process, satisfy the needs and resources of the client. Functionally vital elements, such as furniture, mirrors, lighting, and so on, are a reaction to the applied design principles and have to merge well with the overall theme. Lighting plays a crucial role and a balance has to be achieved between ambient and task lighting that exploits natural lighting to its best. Ambient lighting has the ability to play on the client's



emotions, elevate the salon's image and even affects buying habits.

Retail merchandise is another revenue generating source of salons and hence, a lot of thought goes into designing it. The retail window has to be strategically placed with dramatic lighting to highlight the contemporary approach of the products in the market. Many a times, the retail area is spread out through the salon to catch the customer's eye.

Having done salons in versatile spaces like luxury malls or heritage sites, it has to be acknowledged that every site has a certain character attached to it, which needs to be taken into consideration while designing. Designs respond to and coordinate with the building shell and acknowledge the physical location and social context of the project. When a salon has a brand identity to maintain, these principles are adopted while respecting the unique brand identity.

From being simple spaces that provided basic services, today, a salon evokes an aura of peace and calm that attempts to create a relaxation space for the user. This is achieved through design and the materials used in the interior palette. Further, functionality and aesthetics in design must complement and balance each other to ensure that the unique luxury quotient is enhanced to craft novel solutions more suited to the culture of the contemporary lifestyles.

In a competitive market, it is important to identify a desired brand image, and salon owners have started to convey the upscale image in the minds of consumers through the design that forms a crucial element of the overall client experience. The positioning, the targeted clientele, geographical location, its typology and the cultural context dictate the approach to salon design. ⑤



Rahul Bansal and Amit Aurora

Amit Aurora along with Rahul Bansal, both architecture graduates from School of Planning and Architecture in Delhi, founded DCA Architects in 1996. Aurora and Bansal, both were enlisted among the Grandmasters of Design in 2016 (Society Interiors) and also chosen among the 10 most sought after workplace design professionals in the country (Commercial Design -2016).